

Christ In The Wilderness
“Water In The Wilderness”
Exodus 17:1-7

Introduction:

1. Tonight - We're Going To Head Back:
 - To The Book Of Exodus - Chapter 15 To Start:
 - Where - Once Again:
 - We Will Look For Christ:
 - In The “Types And Shadows” That Appear:
 - As The Children Of Israel:
 - Were Wandering Through The Wilderness:
 - On Their Way From Egypt To The Promised Land!

2. We've Already Seen Christ:
 - In The Passover Lamb:
 - Because - As The “Lamb Of God” - Jesus Christ:
 - Brings Redemption:
 - To Everyone Who Believes In Him & Trusts In:
 - His Blood:
 - For Their Salvation!
 - And - His Body:
 - For Their Strength!

3. We Also Saw Christ - Last Sunday:
 - In The Manna:
 - That Rained From Heaven:
 - Every Night - For 40 Years:
 - In Order To Feed The Children Of Israel:
 - But Also - To Test Them!
- Because - As The “Bread Of Heaven” - Jesus Christ Himself:
 - Brings Relief:
 - To Everyone Who Hungers For Truth And Righteousness!
- Because - “Christ Is The Food Of His People, While They Are In The Wilderness Of This World!” (John Gill)
 - And - He Alone:
 - Can Save, Strengthen, Sustain, And Satisfy You!

4. Well - Tonight:
 - As The Children Of Israel Continue:
 - Their Journey Into The Wilderness:
 - Still *Before* Meeting With God:
 - To Receive The Law:
 - At Mount Sinai!
- They Will & We Will Learn Something More:
 - About Christ!
 - And How He Revives & Refreshes:
 - Those Who Are Dry And Thirsty:
 - In The Wilderness Of This World!

5. And So - Let's First Read Together From Exodus 15:
 - Where - After - God Had:
 - Provided His People:
 - Manna To Eat! And Even After:
 - God Had Delivered His People:
 - Through The Red Sea!
 - In 15:22-27 - “So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. / And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. / And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? / And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, / And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put

none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee. / And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters!”

- Of Course - Water Is Necessary:
 - No Matter Where You Are!
 - To Clean!
 - To Drink!
 - To Live!
- So - We Can Certainly Understand:
 - Why The Children Of Israel:
 - Would Have “Murmured” Again:
 - When They “Found No Water!”
 - Water Was & Still Is A Critical Resource!

6. But - What Did God Do For Them:

- In Spite Of Their Murmuring & Complaining?
 - He Provided Water!
 - First - With Waters Of Marah:
 - Through A Miracle:
 - Which Made Marah’s Bitter Water Sweet!
 - But Then - Also - With The Waters Of Elim:
 - Which Came From Twelve Springs!
- In Both Cases:
 - The Water Was “Local” Water!
 - It Was Given To The People:
 - In The Places They Camped!
 - But Also - In Both Cases:
 - That “Local” Water - Was:
 - Limited Water!
 - It Wasn’t Enough:
 - To Get Them Through The Rest Of The Wilderness:
 - On Their Way To The Promised Land!
- They Would Need:
 - More Water! And:
 - They Would Need That Water:
 - To Last!

7. And So - When They Went Further:

- Into The Wilderness:
 - To A Place Called “Rephidim” - Which Means:
 - “Resting Places” - They Found Anything:
 - But Rest! Because:
- Once Again - From Exodus 17:1-7:
 - “And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. / Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? / And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? / And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. / And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. / Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. / And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?”
 - So - “Rephidim” *Did* Turn Out:
 - To Be A Place Of Rest & Refreshment:
 - After All! But Only Because:
 - Once Again, The Lord Provided Water For His People!
 - But - *Before* This New Miracle Took Place:
 - Instead Of Being A Place Of Rest - It Had Been:

1. *A Place Of Great Distress!*

- After All - As We Just Read From 17:1:
 - In That Place - There Was:
- A Drought!
 - “There Was No Water For The People To Drink!”
 - Perhaps The People:
 - Were Wondering - Where & Why:
 - Moses Was Taking Them!
 - After All - For Over A Million People:
 - Along With Their Livestock:
 - You Would Need:
 - A Tremendous Amount:
 - Of Fresh Water!
 - So - In That Place Of Drought:
 - We Also See:
- A Desire!
 - Is It Any Wonder That:
 - In 17:3 - We Read That:
 - “The people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses!”
 - They Were Thirsty!
 - And - They Were Worried!
 - It Was A Matter Of Life & Death!
 - **IE:** Think Of How Parents Are Reacting With A Shortage Of Baby Formula! Think Of How They Would React & You Would React With Not Just A Shortage Of Water - But No Water! For You! For Your Children!
 - They Were Desperate!
 - Which Is Why - In 17:2a - They Made:
 - A Demand:
 - To Moses - Their Leader!
 - “Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink!”
 - The People Were:
 - In Deep Distress!
 - Because They Needed Water!
 - And - Things Were Going:
 - From Bad To Worse!
 - Because - That Place:
 - Of Great Distress - Became Further:

2. *A Place Of Great Distrust!*

- Distrust - Even Of Moses:
 - The One God Had Called & Used:
 - To Bring His People:
 - Out Of Egypt!
 - And - This Distrust:
 - Is Seen Through Their:
- Anger - With Moses!
 - Again - In 17:2 - It Says That:
 - “The People Did Chide With Moses!”
 - This Is A Much Stronger Display Of Dissatisfaction:
 - Than Just Their Murmuring Against Moses - In 17:3!
 - Their Contention With Moses:
 - Almost Came To Blows!
 - In 17:4 - Even Moses Understood:
 - The Gravity Of The Situation!
 - He Told The Lord:
 - “They be almost ready to stone me!”
 - The People Were So Afraid:
 - For Their Lives - That:
 - They Were Willing:

- To Take Moses' Life!
- And Appoint Themselves A New Leader:
 - Who Would Take Them Back:
 - To Egypt!
- But - We Further See Their Distrust In Their:
- Accusation - Against Moses!
 - They Were Willing To Go To The Extreme:
 - Because - They Believed:
 - Moses Did Not Have Their Best Interest:
 - At Heart!
 - They Believed - In 17:3:
 - That Moses Had Turned On Them:
 - And Was Intentionally Trying To:
 - Kill Them & Their Families!
 - How Soon They Forgot:
 - Not Only How:
 - God Used Moses:
 - To Deliver Them!
 - But Also - How:
 - Moses Himself Had Appealed To God:
 - And Interceded For Them!
 - But - The Truth Was:
 - Their Distrust & Dissatisfaction:
 - Wasn't With Moses:
 - It Was With God!
 - Their Real Argument:
 - Wasn't With Moses! Their:
- Argument - Was Against God!
 - In 17:2 - Moses Pointed This Out To Them:
 - When He Said:
 - "Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?"
 - This Was The Real Problem - And:
 - The Real Sin:
 - That Was Going On:
 - There At Rephidim!
 - They Were Tempting God!
 - This Is Explained Further:
 - In 17:7 - Where We Are Told That Moses:
 - "Called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?"
 - "Massah" - Means Strife!
 - "Meribah" - Means Temptation!
 - So - When They Strove Against:
 - Moses - They Were Really:
 - Striving Against & Tempting:
 - The Lord!
- And - What Was This Temptation?
 - Their Question:
 - Was Not Asked Out Of Sincerity:
 - But Out Of Contempt!
 - "Is The Lord Among Us, Or Not?"
 - They Weren't Merely Questioning:
 - God's Presence With Them!
 - They Were Questioning:
 - His Very Existence!
- In Effect:
 - They Were Denying God!
 - They Were Denying:

- His Power:
 - To **Do** What He Had Just Done For Them! (Plagues / Red Sea)
- They Were Denying:
 - His Provision:
 - To **Give** What He Had Just Given To Them! (Meat / Manna / Water)
- They Were Denying:
 - His Person:
 - That He Was The Great "I Am!"
 - The True And Living God!
- They Denied The:
 - Guidance & Goodness & The Very:
 - "God-ness" Of The Lord!
- And So - That Place Of Great Distress:
 - Turned Into A Place:
 - Of Great Distrust!
 - And - This Would Lead To:
 - Rephidim Becoming:

3. *A Place Of Decision!*

- The Children Of Israel:
 - Tempted God!
 - And - God Is Not:
 - To Be Tempted Or Presumed Upon!
 - Later On - In Deuteronomy 6:16:
 - This Temptation Will Become The Foundation For God's Command:
 - "Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah!"
 - (Quoted By Jesus!)
 - And So - God Tells Moses:
 - In 17:5 - "Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go!"
 - This Was A Serious Situation!
 - Moses Headed Out Of The Camp:
 - With - What Is Elsewhere Called:
 - "The Rod Of God!" - Because:
 - The Rod Was A Symbol:
 - Of God's Discipline & Judgment!
 - It Was What God Had Moses Use:
 - To Bring About:
 - So Many Of The Plagues:
 - That Devastated The Egyptians And Their Land!
 - It Was That Rod:
 - That Turned Into:
 - A Serpent Before Pharaoh:
 - And Ate Up All The Other:
 - Serpents - Brought Up By Pharaoh's Sorcerers!
 - It Was That Rod:
 - That Was Used To:
 - Show The Power Of God:
 - And Bring Judgment Upon Pharaoh!
 - By Bringing Forth:
 - The Frogs & The Lice & The Hail & The Locusts - And:
 - Turning The Waters Of Egypt:
 - Into Blood!
 - So - What Was God About To Do:
 - This Time? Through Moses:
 - With The Rod Of God In His Hand?
 - The Rod Of His Judgment?
 - Well - In The Very Next Verse:

- We See That - Not Only Was The Rod:
 - A Symbol Of God's Discipline And Judgment!
- The Rod Was Also A Symbol:
 - Of God's Deliverance And Grace!
 - Because - It Was The Same Rod Used:
 - To Divide The Red Sea:
 - For The Deliverance Of The People Of Israel!
 - And So - What Happens Next:
 - In 17:6 - Is A *Further* Display:
 - Of God's Grace & Deliverance:
 - For His People!
 - When The Lord Says To Moses:
 - "Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel!"
 - The Lord Had Every Right:
 - To ***Stand Against:***
 - The Children Of Israel:
 - To Judge Them & To Destroy Them Because:
 - They Denied Him & Tempted Him!
 - But - Instead - The Lord Said To Moses:
 - "I Will ***Stand Before*** Thee!"
 - Often Used Of A Servant:
 - Standing Before His Master:
 - To Do His Bidding!
 - The Lord Takes The Humble Position:
 - Of A Servant - To Help:
 - Moses & The People:
 - With Their Thirst!
 - And So - At That Place:
 - Of Decision - It Became:

4. ***A Place Of Great Declarations!***

- In That Place:
 - God Declares His Compassion & Grace:
 - Toward His People!
 - Instead Of Striking ***Them:***
 - With The Rod Of God:
 - For Judgment & Discipline!
 - God Told Moses To Strike:
 - And - "Smite ***The Rock***" Instead!
 - Out Of His Mercy!
 - And - What Did God Promise?
 - 17:6 - "And there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink!"
 - And Then - "Moses Did So!"
 - And - So Did God!
 - That Rod:
 - Was A Symbol Of God's Power!
 - Power To Both:
 - Kill & Make Alive!
 - Power To Both:
 - Punish & Preserve!
 - Power To Both:
 - Discipline & Deliver!
 - And - That Rock:
 - Became A Symbol Of God's Own Person!
 - Because - In The Place:
 - God Declared His Compassion:

- To His People:
- He Also Declared:
 - His Christ:
 - For His People!
 - Turn With Me Now To:
 - 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 - Where The Apostle Paul:
 - Recounts The Same Story That We Just Went Through From Exodus 17!
 - And - He Tells Us That Something Else Was Going On:
 - There In The Wilderness At The Rock Of Horeb!
 - 10:1-4 - “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; / And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; / And did all eat the same spiritual meat; / And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ!”
 - The Rock That Moses Struck:
 - Was A Type Of Christ!
 - And So - The Water God Provided In The Wilderness:
 - Was Not Just For The Children Of Israel:
 - It Was For Us! Because:
- The Wilderness:
 - That Place Of Distress:
 - Is A Picture Of:
 - Our Own Spirits - And:
 - Our Own Nature - Apart From The Lord!
 - We Don't Just Live In:
 - A “Dry And Thirsty Land!”
 - We Are The Ones Who Make It So!
- The People:
 - Who Were People Of Distrust - Even To The Point:
 - Of Denying God Himself:
 - Are A Picture Of Us!
 - Our Own Sin - And:
 - Our Own Rebellion Against God!
 - A Wickedness That Deserves:
 - The Severest Discipline Of God!
 - And So:
- The Rod:
 - Is A Picture Of:
 - Our Own Sentence:
 - Of Judgment - That We Deserve:
 - Because Of Who We Are, What We've Done & Even What We've Said Against The Lord! But:
- The Rock:
 - Is A Picture Of:
 - Jesus Christ - Our Substitute!
 - “That Rock Is Christ!”
 - He Is The One:
 - Who Was Struck By God In Judgment:
 - For Us! In Our Place & On Our Behalf!
 - As Paul Tells Us In:
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21 - “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him!”
 - And Now:
- The Water:
 - Is A Picture Of:
 - Our Salvation - By The Grace Of God!
 - Even As Jesus Himself Said:
 - In John 7:38 - “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water!”
 - The Water That God Gave To His People:

- Was Full In Its Quantity - And:
 - Fresh In Its Quality!
 - It Was All They Needed:
 - To Quench Their Thirst!
- In Psalm 114:8 - The Psalmist Recalls This Event:
 - When He Says That The Lord - “Turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters!!”
 - God’s Provision Was Full & Fresh!
- But - Something That We Discover From:
 - Paul - Is That The Water Given By The Lord:
 - To His People - Became:
 - A Fountain That Followed Them: - All Throughout The Wilderness!
 - 1 Corinthians 10:4 - “They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them!”
 - As The Children Of Israel Continued To Journey Through The Wilderness Of Sinai:
 - Something Followed Them!
 - Not The “Rock” Itself, But The Water From The Rock!
 - It Kept Flowing!
 - And - Made Those Dry & Dusty:
 - River-Beds & Ravines:
 - Into Rivers!
 - This Is Also Remembered In:
 - Psalm 78:15-16 - “He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. / He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers!”
- Now - There Would Come A Time:
 - When Even *Those* Waters:
 - Would Run Dry!
 - To Show Them & Us - Once Again:
 - That We Need More Than Just:
 - The Substance Of Water - H₂O:
 - To Sustain Us In The Wilderness Of This World!

Conclusion:

1. And That Is Why We Find Christ:
 - In That Wilderness!
 - Jesus Christ - Is Our Rock!
 - The One Who Took Our Judgment For Sin:
 - Upon Himself:
 - Fully! He Was Smitten By God With His Rod Of The Cross!
2. So That Now - He Might Provide:
 - Through His Resurrection & His Life:
 - The Full & Fresh & Flowing Water Of Salvation:
 - That Will Follow Us:
 - All The Days Of Our Lives!
 - In Isaiah 43:20 - The Lord Says:
 - “I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen!”
 - Jesus Christ Is Our Rock & Our Water:
 - In The Wilderness Of This World!
 - And He Will Revive You & Refresh You:
 - If Only You Will:
 - Keep Going To Him To Drink!

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